

Medical commander has clear vision

By: Staff Sgt. Shannon Parks
179th Public Affairs Office

There is a new commander in town, but he really isn't very new at all. In fact, he has been a member of the 179th Medical Squadron for nearly 20 years.

Lt. Col. James Patterson, a civilian optometrist, started at the 179th in 1983 as an eager young lieutenant. His past roles as mobility officer, flight leader and chief of optometry services helped shape him into a confident leader prepared for his challenging new role as commander.

He credits his military success, however, to fellow 179th members who mentored him throughout the years.

"Lt. Col. Willis Waldron and past commander Col. Ronald Stanich taught me a lot about leadership through example," he said.



Lt. Col. James Patterson, MDS commander.

"That Jim would call me a mentor is humbling and surprising, especially since I consider him a mentor to me," said Col. Willis Waldron, support group commander. "I've admired him as a person and a professional; he commits himself totally to his family, his community and his military oath...and does it all with just the right balance of seriousness and humor."

Although Patterson has been with the MDS for almost two decades his staff says he definitely isn't stuck in the past. Lt. Col. Jack Kampf, executive administrator, sees Patterson as being on target with new trends. "He's re-engineering the way we do business," Kampf said.

Patterson looks forward to continued success with his staff. "I have been fortunate enough throughout the years to be blessed with great people," he said. "I have great confidence in them, their work ethic, their job knowledge and their dedication. They make my job so much easier with their great attitudes."

Night vision story continued...

different types finishes the airdrop phase of NVG airdrop qualification. Airland training involves only one aircraft or what is referred to as a single ship. The C-130 lands in a field that is lit with an infrared pattern. Aircrews are required to practice on a simulator and then complete eight actual landings before certification.

"The goggles enable us to do exactly what we do during the day," said Stone. The NVG's sit one to two inches from the head and are completely hands free. "It is like looking through a set of binoculars," he said.

NVG training will be extensive during February and part of March and will occur continuously to keep crews current.

"Our number one goal is to have 100% of our crews trained," said Stone.

Roads to base under construction

If you are accustomed to using State Route 13 or State Route 545 to get the base, you may need to look at another way.

Starting March 1, 2003, the US 30 Bridge Replacement Project starts its second phase. Only one lane of traffic in the outside lanes will be open. The eastbound entrance ramp from SR13 will be closed and the westbound entrance ramp from SR 545 will be closed. Beginning in March 2004, both ramps to SR 13 will be closed.

The entire project is scheduled for completion in July 2005.

A woman of faith, courage and self-sacrificing love

By: Chaplain Bob Jackson

Elizabeth Lange was among the Haitian refugees who came to the U.S. in the early 1800's. She settled in Maryland and opened a school in her home, but the desire of her heart was to become a religious sister dedicated to serving God and the poor. However even as a free black woman, such an opportunity was not open to her in a country and state ruled by slavery, still she knew that with God all things are possible.

The bishop needed to provide education for the Haitian immigrants and Elizabeth was asked to establish a school. In 1828 she opened St. Francis School, which this year celebrates 175 years and is the oldest continuing educational institution for children of African heritage in our country. In 1829 she and three other women took vows as the Oblate Sisters of Providence—the first congregation of women religious of African descent in the world. She went on to found an orphanage, a home for widows and offer vocational training to young women.

With the faith of God, the Spirit's gift of courage, and self-sacrificing love, she overcame the limits society placed on blacks and women. She would allow nothing to stand between her and God's call to serve her poor brothers and sisters. Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange was indeed a woman of vision and commitment. Her example should be an inspiration to all Americans.